

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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TO AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

S E C R E T STATE 245309

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, BA

SUBJECT:BAHRAIN WEAPONS REQUEST (TOW)

REF:(A) MANAMA 0888 (B) STATE 196626 (C) AMMAN 6507

1. APPRECIATE IMPLICATIONS IN RENEWED GOB INTEREST IN TOW
AND POSITION IN WHICH YOU ARE PLACED AS RESULT. SIMPLE
FACT OF MATTER, HOWEVER, IS THAT WE DO NOT REPEAT NOT
HAVE ANY TOWS AVAILABLE FROM CURRENT PRODUCTION - EVEN IN
SMALL QUANTITIES - WHICH WE COULD MAKE AVAILABLE TO GOB
AT THIS TIME.

2. YOU MAY WISH TO RESPOND TO PM THAT USG REMAINS PREPARED
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TO UNDERTAKE DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF

APPROPRIATE AMOUNTS OF TOW UPON RECEIPT OF FORMAL WRITTEN REQUEST FROM GOB, BASED UPON CABINET DECISION. NEVERTHELESS, VERY ACUTE SUPPLY SITUATION NOW AFFECTING DELIVERY OF THIS SYSTEM MAKES IT NECESSARY TO REAFFIRM THAT LEAD-TIME REMAINS AS SET FORTH IN PARA 3 (C) OF REFTEL (B). YOU MAY ALSO WISH TO POINT OUT TO PM THAT TOW SUPPLY SITUATION RECENTLY FORCED US TO TURN DOWN OMANI REQUEST FOR THIS EQUIPMENT, EVEN IN VIEW OF THAT COUNTRY'S OBVIOUS SUBSTANTIVE NEEDS. OTHER COUNTRIES' ORDERS CURRENTLY ON BOOKS HAVE VIRTUALLY ALL BEEN SCALED DOWN TO BARE MINIMUM ACQUISITION LEVELS.

3. PM IS, WE ARE SURE, AWARE OF VALUE WE PLACE ON INCREASED COOPERATION OF ALL TYPES WITH HIS GOVERNMENT. THIS IS BORNE OUT BY OUR RECENT EFFORTS IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND OTHER FIELDS WHERE WE ARE MOVING TO RESOLVE NUMEROUS PAST PROBLEMS. WE CERTAINLY INTEND TO MAINTAIN THIS SAME POSITIVE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION IN ASSISTING GOB IN MEETING ITS LEGITIMATE DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS.

4. YOU MAY INFORM PM THAT DOD HAS MATTER OF TOW SUPPLY AND PRODUCTION UNDER CONTINUOUS REVIEW, AND THAT REQUEST BY GOB WILL BE GIVEN ACTIVE CONSIDERATION AS SITUATION EVOLVES. IN THIS REGARD, WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY MORE PRECISE INFORMATION WHICH PM MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE CONCERNING WHAT WOULD BE CONSIDERED QUOTE IN TIME TO MEET BAHRAIN'S NEEDS UNQUOTE (PARA 4 REFTEL A) AND THE APPROXIMATE QUANTITY REQUIRED. YOU MUST HOWEVER, STRESS TO PM OUR INABILITY TO MAKE ANY COMMITMENT RE TOW TO HIM AT THIS TIME.

5. YOU SHOULD INFORM DEPT PROMPTLY IF YOU BELIEVE THAT APPROACH TO PM ALONG ABOVE LINES WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT MIDEASTFOR NEGOTIATIONS. IN THAT EVENT YOU SHOULD SUBMIT FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO COURSE WE SHOULD FOLLOW. INGERSOLL

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